GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3392
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2002
INFANT MORTALITY RATE
PRABHUNATH SINGH;SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the infant mortality rate remained at 69 in the country while other developing countries achieved a rate of 29-51 by 1998 as per C&AG Report No. 3 of 2000 (Civil);

(b) if so, the reasons for the poor performance of the country in comparison with other countries; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the position?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) As per the Sample Registration System, the infant mortality rate (IMR) in India has declined from 80 per thousand live births in 1991 to 68 per thousands live births in 2000. As per `The State of World Population 2001 - UNFPA`,
(i) IMR in the world and in India was 55 and 65 per 1000 live births respectively and
(ii) in less developed regions and least developed countries, it was 59 and 92 respectively.

(b) Major reasons for infant mortality include pre-mature births, acute respiratory infections and vaccine preventable diseases like measles. Factors that contribute to high mortality include low literacy and other social developmental indicators.

(c) Steps are being taken by the Government to further reduce the IMR.Under the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme, immunization against six vaccine preventable diseases namely Childhood Tuberculosis, Diptheria, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Measles and Tetanus, facilities for prevention of deaths due to acute respiratory infections and dehydration due to diarrhoea and essential newborn care are being provided. Towards improving the nutritional status of infants and children, promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding practices is being undertaken. Programme for prophylaxis against Vitamin `A` deficiency and iron deficiency anemia are under implementation. To improve outreach of these services several schemes including organization of RCH Camps, RCH Outreach Scheme, Dai Training Programme are under implementation.